

## BITS OF BYPLAY

By Luke McLuke  
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## Luke McLuke Says

Another strange thing is how people who know they can't write prose will try to write poetry.

A woman doesn't begin to be a burden to herself until she finds that she doesn't carry her age well.

Some men are so contrary that they grumble because they can't make hay in January and cut ice in July.

And what doth it profit a man to have Will Power when his wife has Won't Power?

A woman sure does love the Cheerful Liar who tells her that she looks younger than she did 10 years ago.

After all, man is merely a worm who has sense enough to hang on to the butt end of the fishing rod.

Things could be worse. Just suppose the ten-cent stores were handling automobiles.

In fiction, the Hero always marries the Girl. But any wife can tell you that in real life the Villain usually marries the girl.

## OUCH!

"How did you get here, my poor man?" asked the Missionary who was visiting the Penitentiary.

"I am here as the result of my ambition to rise in the world," replied Convice 232323. "I was a porch climber."

## "MISS DEMEANOR" IS RIGHT

"I do not think that it is any crime for a girl to expose her knee," said Miss Shapely.

"Well, I wouldn't call it a crime," replied Mr. Fresh. "But it would be a sort of miss demeanor, wouldn't it?"

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The Adventures of a  
Demobilized Officer Who  
Found Peace Dull

by CYRIL McNEILE  
"SAPPER"

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IRWIN MYERS

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## SYNOPSIS.

PROLOGUE.—In December, 1918, four men gathered in a hotel in Berne and heard one of the quartet outline a plan to paralyze Great Britain and at the same time seize world power. The other three, Hocking, American, and Steinman, and Von Gratz, German, all millionaires, agree to the scheme, providing another man, Hiram Potts, an American, is taken in. The instigator of the plot gives his name as Comte de Guy, but when he leaves for England with his daughter he decides to use the name Carl Peterson.

CHAPTER I.—Capt. Hugh (Bulldog) Drummond, a retired officer, advertises for work that will give him excitement, signing "X10." As a result he meets Phyllis Benton, a young woman who answered his ad. She tells him of strange murders and robberies of which she suspects a band headed by Carl Peterson and Henry Lakington of being the leaders.

CHAPTER II.—Drummond decides to go to The Larches, Miss Benton's home. An attempt is made on the road to wreck his machine when another, occupied by Peterson, Lakington and a strange man, blocks the driving while Phyllis Benton and her father Drummond hears a terrible shriek at The Elms. During the night Drummond leaves The Larches and explores The Elms. He discovers Lakington and Peterson using a thumbscrew on an American who signs a paper. Drummond rescues the American after a struggle and takes him to his home. The man is Hiram C. Potts.

CHAPTER III.—Peterson visits Drummond the next day, departing with a threat to return later and recover Potts and also a torn paper which Drummond seized the night of the fight. With the aid of Peter Darrell, an old army friend, Drummond arranges to hide Potts, and substitute in his place one Mullings, a demobilized soldier, who is seized by Peterson and his gang and taken to The Elms, along with Drummond.

CHAPTER IV.—When Peterson discovers the hoax Drummond is escorted by Irma, to a room where he is to stay for the night. During the night Drummond is exploring the house when he gets in a strange room in which is a cobra. He escapes, but on the stairs has a fight in the dark.

CHAPTER V.—Drummond enlists the aid of Algy Longworth, Toby Sinclair, Ted Jerminham and Jerry Seymour, the latter an aviator. Drummond, after an encounter with the pseudo Potts, meets Irma talking to the marquis of Laidley and suspects the gang is plotting for the Laidley lands. Drummond and his friends are surprised as they sit in his apartment. Lakington carries off Potts.

(Continued from yesterday)

"Well," he asked, "have you got the old woman?"

"Bound and gagged in the kitchen," answered one of them laconically. "Are you going to do this crowd in?"

The speaker looked at the unconscious men with hatred in his eyes. "They encumber the earth—this breed of puppy."

"They will not encumber it for long," said Lakington softly. "But the one in the window there is not going to die so easily. I have a small unsettled score with him."

"All right; he's in the car." A voice came from outside the window, and with a last look at Hugh Drummond, Lakington turned away.

"Then we'll go," he remarked. "Au revoir, my blundering young bull. Before I've finished with you, you'll scream for mercy. And you won't get it."

Through the still night air there came the thrumming of the engine of a powerful car. Gradually it died away and there was silence. And then, with a sudden crack, Peter Darrell's head rolled over and hit the arm of his chair.

## CHAPTER SIX.

In Which a Very Old Game Takes Place on the Hog's Back.

## ONE.

A thick grey mist lay over the Thames. It covered the water and the low fields to the west like a thick white carpet; it drifted sluggishly

under the old bridge which spans the river between Goring and Streatham. It was the hour before dawn, and sleepy passengers, rubbing the windows of their carriages as the Plymouth boat express rushed on toward London, shivered and drew their rugs closer around them. It looked cold and dead.

Slowly, almost imperceptibly, the vapor rose, and spread upwards up the wooded hills by Basildon. It drifted through the shrubs and rosebushes of a little garden, which stretched from a bungalow down to the water's edge, until at length wisps of it brushed gently round the bungalow itself. Suddenly the window of one of the downstairs rooms was flung open, and a man with a white haggard face leaned out drawing great gulps of fresh air into his lungs. Three other men lay sprawling uncouthly in chairs, and two dogs lay motionless on the hearthrug.

After a moment or two the man

withdrew, only to appear again with one of the others in his arms. And then, having dropped his burden through the window on to the lawn outside, he repeated his performance with the remaining two. Finally he pitched the two dogs after them, and then, with his hand to his forehead, he staggered down to the water's edge.

"Holy smoke!" he muttered to himself, as he plunged his head into the cold water, "talk about the morning after!"

After a while, with the water still dripping down his face, he returned to the bungalow and found the other three in various stages of partial insensibility.

"Wake up, my heroes," he remarked, "and go and put your great fat heads in the river. We were all of us drugged or doped somehow. And now," he added bitterly, "we've all got heads, and we have not got Potts."

"I don't remember anything," said Toby Sinclair, "except falling asleep. Have they taken him?"

"Of course they have," said Hugh. "Just before I went off I saw 'em all in the garden, and that swine Lakington was with them. However, while you go and put your nuts in the river, I'll go up and make certain."

With a grim smile he watched the three men lurch down to the water; then he turned and went upstairs to the room which had been occupied by the American millionaire. It was empty, as he had known it would be, and with a smothered curse he made his way downstairs again.

## TWO.

"Has it struck you fellows," remarked Hugh, at the conclusion of lunch, "that seated around this table are four officers who fought with some distinction and much discomfort in the recent historic struggle?"

"How beautifully you put it, old fella!" said Darrell.

"Has it further struck you fellows," continued Hugh, "that last night we were done down, trampled on, had for mugs by a crowd of dirty blackguards composed largely of the dregs of the universe?"

"A veritable Solomon," said Algy, gazing at him admiringly through his eyeglass. "I told you this morning I detested your friends."

"Has it still further struck you," went on Hugh, a trifle grimly, "that we aren't standing for it? I propose that we should tackle the blighters tonight."

"Tonight!" echoed Darrell. "Where?"

"At The Elms, of course. That's where the wretched Potts is for a certainty."

"And how do you propose that we should set about it?" demanded Sinclair.

Drummond drained his port and grinned gently.

"By stealth, dear old beans—by stealth. You—and I thought we might rake in Ted Jerminham, and perhaps Jerry Seymour, to join the happy throng—will make a demonstration in force, with the idea of drawing off the enemy, thereby leaving the coast clear for me to explore the house for the unfortunate Potts. An accident. . . . A car. . . . What is the connecting-link. . . . Why, drink. Write it down, Algy, or we might forget. Now, can you beat that?"

"We might have some chance," said Darrell kindly, "if we had the slightest idea what you were talking about."

"Pay attention, all of you," said Hugh. "Tonight some time about ten of the clock, Algy's motor will proceed along the Godalming-Guildford road. It will contain you three—also Ted and Jerry Seymour, if we can get 'em. On approaching the gate of The Elms, you will render the night hideous with your vocal efforts. Stray passers-by will think that you are all tight. Then will come the dramatic moment, when, with a heavy crash, you ram the gate. Horrified at this wanton damage to property, you will leave the car and proceed in mass formation up the drive."

"Still giving tongue?" queried Darrell.

"Still giving tongue. Either Ted or Jerry or both of 'em will approach the house and inform the owner in heartbroken accents that they have damaged his gate post. You three will remain in the garden—you might be recognized. Then it will be up to you. You'll have several men all round you. Keep 'em occupied—somehow. They won't hurt you; they'll only be concerned with seeing that you don't go where you're not wanted. The last thing they want to do is to draw any suspicion on themselves—and, on the face of it, you are merely five convivial wanderers who have looked on the wine when it was red."

"I think," he added thoughtfully, "that ten minutes will be enough for me."

"What will you be doing?" said Toby.

"I shall be looking for Potts. Don't worry about me. I'll look after myself. Now, is that clear?"

"Perfectly," said Darrell, after a short silence. "But I don't know that I like it, Hugh. It seems to me, old son, that you're running an unnecessary lot of risk."

"Got any alternative?" demanded Drummond.

"If we're all going down," said Darrell, "why not stick together and rush the house in a mass?"

[To be continued tomorrow]

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